

**USAID/The Gambia**  
**ANNUAL REPORT FY 2003**

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USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse  
1611 N. Kent Street, Suite 200  
Arlington, VA 22209-2111  
Telephone: 703-351-4006 Ext 106  
Fax: 703-351-4039  
Email: [docorder@dec.cdie.org](mailto:docorder@dec.cdie.org)  
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## **A. Program Level Narrative**

### **Program Performance Summary:**

Information Annex Topic: Non-presence Countries -The Gambia

In March 2001, Catholic Relief Service (CRS) completed the implementation of a three and a half-year DAP, comprised of the Child Survival Project and the Sesame Growers' Association (SGA) Institutional Strengthening Project in The Gambia.

CRS proposed a Title II Development Activity Program for FY 2002-2006 that will increase food security in the most vulnerable regions of Senegal and The Gambia (SeneGambia) by addressing some of the underlying causes of food insecurity. Rural households in both countries suffer from chronic and seasonal food insecurity as a result of poor economic access to, and limited availability of, food. Likewise, vulnerable segments of the population in both countries, such as orphans, the disabled, street children, people living in institutions and people affected by HIV/AIDS are food insecure due to limited availability and access to food resources. CRS therefore proposes a two-pronged approach to increasing food security in Senegal and The Gambia through sesame promotion using a market led approach and safety net activities.

The SeneGambia DAP did not receive final approval from USAID until July 2002. In order to compensate for the delay in project start up and achieve all proposed objectives and indicators, CRS/SeneGambia plans to request a no cost extension in FY07. Due to the late final approval, CRS/SeneGambia DAP activities, which were to be funded through local monetization, did not occur in FY02. Only a small portion of monetization proceeds were received in FY02 and as such, CRS private funds supported limited activities, which are reported in the narrative below.

#### **Activities supported by CRS Private Funds**

##### **A. Sesame Led Marketing:**

In The Gambia, twelve collection centers were renovated and supplied with basic materials in order to enable the collection and storage of sesame. Each of the 72 Sesame Grower's Association (SGA) buying points were supplied with sieves for the cleaning of the farmers' sesame before purchase to ensure that clean sesame is supplied to the collection centers. Twenty-four collection center workers (12 storekeepers and 12 Operators) were trained and contracted by NAWFA to help the management committees of the centers in the purchase and storage of the sesame. An aggressive market information campaign was launched during FY02 to sensitize members of the public including farmers and traders about sesame and sesame trading. Approximately 100 MT of Gambian sesame was marketed through the collection centers in FY02.

CRS funds were used to purchase sesame seed capital for the 2002-2003 growing season. In providing sesame seed, the surface area dedicated to sesame growing is extended. For the three sesame-growing organizations in Senegal, it is estimated that, of a total of 18,082 kg of seed distributed, CRS directly funded 6,500 kg of seed for this year's growing season. In The Gambia, CRS funded the distribution of 8,000 kg of seed; 5,000 kg were distributed as a response to government efforts to assist farmers who suffered crop damage due to late rainfall. Three thousand seeds were distributed through CRS' partner, the National Association of Women Farmers (NAWFA), to association members.

CRS also purchased materials to accurately measure plots. The materials including tape measures, HP11 machines, compasses, ropes and measuring rods, facilitate the calculation of production estimates and subsequent planning for post harvest marketing campaign.

In collaboration with the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) and NAWFA, CRS began the implementation of on-farm seed varietal research to identify appropriate market demanded seed varieties. Eighteen farmers are involved in these trials and results are expected in the second quarter of FY03.

Related to these research activities, is also an ongoing study on current sesame production practices to identify producers achieving high yields.

CRS organized training of sesame program supervisors and extension agents on improved farming practices in order to achieve optimal sesame yields. In Senegal, CRS resources covered the costs of sesame program staff at each of the three sesame growing organizations to train “contact farmers” who in turn, trained community members in villages in the environs of their home villages. This training focused on illustrating improved practices, spurring interest among farmers in the community and reinforcing the duplication in neighboring communities.

**B. Safety Net:**

Due to late project start up, food for distribution will not be received until December 2002. Therefore Safety Net activities were limited to staff selection and preparatory work regarding studies and potential partners. In The Gambia, there were a minimal number of activities that were implemented under the peer counseling component in 2002. These included the identification and sensitization of villages in Central River Division/North and South where there is the highest prevalence of malnutrition. In collaboration with the Gambian Department of State for Health, Divisional Health Teams, and Divisional Coordinating Committees, twenty communities were sensitized on the goals and objectives of the peer counseling project.

CRS also funded the Senegal Safety Net Study. The main objectives of this study were to identify the most vulnerable communities and institutions, which would be appropriate as beneficiaries for the safety net food distribution in Kolda and Tambacounda. In addition, the survey identified potential partner organizations to implement this activity through CRS. This study provided CRS/SeneGambia with a basis upon which to conduct an assessment of potential partners and vulnerable groups to target. The results will enable CRS to formulate an action plan and budget for the implementation of food distribution in Senegal. A similar study is planned for The Gambia in November 2002.

**C. Monitoring & Evaluation, Audits, and Studies:**

In November 2002 CRS/SeneGambia hired a Monitoring and Evaluation Manager who will be responsible for the design of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. A baseline study is currently underway which will provide all baseline data for activities and objectives for the DAP. This study is anticipated to be completed by December 2002. An audit of one of the SeneGambia DAP partners is on going and will be completed in November 2002.

**Environmental Compliance:**

**Country Closeout & Graduation:**

**D. Results Framework**

**635-001 Contribution to food security**

**Discussion:**